

CONRAD FREDERICK SMITH  
INTERESTING PEOPLE  
Morris Frank

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HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**



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*Buddy, a devoted German shepherd dog, supplies the "eyes" for Morris Frank as he confidently crosses a street swirling with traffic*

## This Blind Boy and His Dog Bring Hope to the Sightless

**A** YOUNG insurance salesman stepped briskly into the lobby of a hotel in a large eastern city. Ahead of him, tugging at a stout leash, trotted a German shepherd dog. The hotel manager intercepted the pair.

"Pardon me, young man," he said. "Dogs aren't allowed in this hotel. I'm afraid you'll have to put this one out."

The youth stooped to caress the rough coat of his comrade. "Sorry," he replied, "but I can't do that. Buddy, here, is my eyes!"

The hotel man glanced quickly from the dog to the sightless eyes of Buddy's master. "I understand," he said. "I guess every rule has an exception."

"Thanks." A gentle pull on the leash, and the dog led her blind master into a waiting elevator.

The young man was Morris S. Frank, of Nashville, Tennessee. At the age of twenty-one, besides being an insurance salesman, he is the directing head of one of the most remarkable educational institutions in America—a school where blind men and women learn to find a second sight through the eyes of trained shepherd dogs.

This school, in Nashville, is known as "The Seeing Eye." There a dozen blind folks, forming partnerships with devoted canine companions, have been taught how to follow these animal leaders as they might follow a human leader, and so have been led to independence, guided about their daily tasks in newly found security.

The story of The Seeing Eye is the story of Morris Frank's own courageous search for independence. In that search he found his second sight, and with it a vision of service to the blind in helping them to fill places of usefulness in the world, forgetful of their handicap.

When Morris was a lad of fourteen a severe blow on one of his eyes during a ball game caused complete loss of sight in both eyes. Blind! At first the handicap seemed almost too great to bear. But soon his fighting spirit, his ambition, and his thirst

for education triumphed. He advanced through preparatory school, then through Vanderbilt University. Meanwhile, he sold insurance to help pay for his education.

One day, a little more than a year ago, Morris Frank read of the new hope that had been brought to blinded war veterans of Europe through the comradeship of German shepherd dogs. At Lausanne, Switzerland, on the Lake of Geneva, is a school known as "Fortunate Fields," where the dog leaders and their blind masters receive their training. Alone and unaided, the blind boy crossed the Atlantic and went to the school. There he was given Buddy, the shaggy friend that has led him to new happiness.

Under the direction of instructors, Morris learned how to follow Buddy across streets thick with swirling traffic, over obstructions, and through jostling crowds. Returning to Nashville, he found that he had acquired new sight. He no longer feared to walk streets, to board street cars, to go in and out of buildings and offices where his work as an insurance agent called

him. Boy and dog soon became a familiar sight on the streets of the Tennessee city. People stopped to watch the intelligent animal as she halted at curbs and obstructions and guided her master as well as a human companion could.

The interest aroused by Morris Frank's experience led to the organization of The Seeing Eye. It has as its president Mrs. Harrison Eustis, the American woman who owns Fortunate Fields and who has long been interested in training dogs for humanitarian service. Although headquarters of the school are in Nashville, the instructors, of whom two are from Europe, are prepared to go to any city where classes may be organized. The Seeing Eye thus is a traveling school, in that it takes its educational methods and instructors right to the doors of the blind.

"Morris Frank opened my eyes to what a dog could mean to a blind man," says Mrs. Eustis, recalling his schooling with shepherd dogs in Switzerland. "He was resting one day after training and I heard him laugh for the first time. Then he said, 'Mrs. Eustis, I've kept a smile on my face for five years because I had to, and now I can laugh because I want to.' That's what his dog had done for him."

The first stage in the course of instruction of The Seeing Eye is the training of the dog. Day after day for three months an expert trainer works the animal over a given route through city streets, until it learns to meet any situation that may be encountered. Through a special harness with U-shaped handle, every movement of the dog is conveyed to the master's hand.

At a curb the animal is taught to pull back and stand still so that its master can find the edge with his cane. At steps, or in meeting approaching traffic, or whenever an obstacle bars progress, the dog must sit down. When meeting pedestrians or encountering trees, it is taught to lean away from its master, who, following the direction of the pull, is led around the obstacle. The animal also learns to pick up anything



went to bed, turnin' the key on his radio still, to horn in on some night club in New York, haunts of wine and women and song?

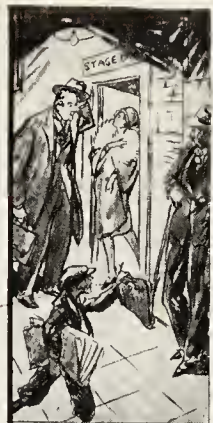
"What does he know of such places, you ask me. You forget that lawsuit, friends, that has been takin' him down to New York about every month or so. His client has complained a lot at the size of his expense account. If you want to know where he spent so much, ask him about the letter he got in a little pink envelope from New York. Ask if it began with 'Dear Daddles'—and ended 'Trixy—kisses and love.' So much for our leadin' legal light. Shall we make him our teacher? 'No,' saith the Angel Gabriel!

"We pass on to old Isaac Barnes, who ain't got any use for actresses. So maybe he would fill the bill. But what about that old mahogany highboy in his farmhouse, friends? He sold it last month to a lady from Boston as a family heirloom and a genuine antique. Ask him where he got it from. Did you ever lay eyes on it before? Ask him about the New York dealer who brought it in a truck one night and planted it in Isaac's house. Ask what he got for sellin' the fake. If he's to be teacher of our sons, how many of 'em will land in jail?

"SPEAKIN' of jail reminds me," the hoarse, sepulchral voice went on, "of our good neighbor, Sheriff Doane—the only man we got in our village to uphold the law of the land—swore in to defend the Constitution and protect our homes from crime. So maybe he would do for the school. But, friends and feller citizens, ask the sheriff what he done with that truckload of Canada hootch he grabbed from a rum runner last week! Ask him if it's still in his barn! If it ain't there, let's be fair to him, folks—for this is the Angel Gabriel. Let's not judge the sheriff harsh, even though he has been harsh on Miss Train. Maybe he took it down to Montpelier, as he's supposed to do by law. If he did, he got a receipt for it. Ask him to show it, or show us the stuff—or else forever hold his peace!

"So much for the men candidates. We've considered most of the likeliest now—except for certain good souls on the school board, whose cases we'll look into carefully tomorrow night, just before they hold their meetin' to decide about Miss Train. Speakin' of her reminds me we've left the women out so far. All the females in the place is still to be looked into, friends, and looked into well and deep. But we feel that we have given you bedtime stories enough for one night, so we'll close with a few brief remarks about two sisters in our midst.

"The first is Miss Eliza Brown. Seems natural we should take her first, because all through this rumpus she's been the leadin' candidate for our poor orphan teacher's job. We don't like to say nuthin' against Miss Brown, and we wouldn't if she hadn't kept so busy throwin' rocks at Miss Train. She's so good it hurts to look at her. For thirty-nine years, and maybe more, she has never been a mother or a wife. All we got against her is that down in her cellar you will find a dozen empty bottles. In their state of original sin, she has been buyin' 'em, one every week, all summer from the barber shop. Ask her how they got empty so quick. Could one



friends; and though we feel we must look into the lives of each and every woman and girl who has been runnin' the school-teacher down, we'll do it all in a nice way. We might even be willin' to call it all off, if they would only let up on Miss Train. And we hope they all sleep well tonight. But if they do not repent of their ways by tomorrow at seven P. M., may heaven help their souls! Good night, all. We thank you!"

THE two boys slept sound and deep that night, untroubled by the slightest pity for the luckless females wide awake in the valley below. And the next day, puffed with foolish pride, they looked down from their mountain perch like two ancient pagan gods. But hardly had they finished lunch, when they heard footsteps up the path from the motor road just below. And presently their friend and scout, Sam Waller, came panting into the hut. He was the only living soul to whom they had confided their plan.

"How's it goin', Fat?" asked Jeff.

"G-g-goin'? Gee! It's g-goin' fine! And the w-worst is yet to come!"

"What d'you mean—the worst?" cried Steve.

"Well," said the fat boy, getting his breath, "your stuff went big on that first night. The joke was all on Deacon Giles and they couldn't get enough of it. But then they all began to ask: 'Suppose I'm next? What have I done?' They got thinkin' and rememberin'—especially the school board! And when you began on the women last night, every human hen in the valley said: 'This is an outrage! It's gotta be stopped!'"

The conspirators chuckled, highly amused, but their messenger held up his hand. "W-w-wait a minute! L-listen to this! The next thing they said was: 'It's a c-c-crime!'"

The Angel Gabriel gave a start.

"Crime? What crime?" he retorted. "You mean to tell me it's a crime to crack a few good-natured jokes?"

"Good-natured, eh?" cried the judge's son. "My father didn't see it that way! What did you pitch into him for? Haven't you any better sense? When I told you about that little pink letter I found in one of his law books, you swore you wouldn't tell a soul! Instead of that you've told the world! And you've got him mighty mad—so he's been talkin' about your crime! Criminal libel, that's what it is! He says you can get five years for it!"

"Gosh!" muttered Steve, in a low, hurt tone.

"But that ain't all," went on the scout. "Not contented with gettin' my father's goat, you went and picked on the sheriff, too! He's the one who has started the hue an' cry!"

"Hue an' cry?"

"You betcha! He's organizin' a posse right now—a man hunt—for the criminals—you! And that ain't all," the fat boy said, keenly enjoying their alarm. "Dad says it's a crime to go on the air without no license! Understand? So the Federal Government's on your trail! There'll be a lot of U. S. marshals huntin' 'round these mountains soon!"

At this the guilty radio shark drew up his feet as though they were cold. But the orator now took the floor.

"Let 'em hunt!" (Continued on page 151)

lone female have drunk up twelve big bottles of bay rum?

"But the barber's shop ain't the only place that she has been visitin' of late. Since that handsome young dentist come to town, she has been to his office every few days, till he's filled or pulled half the teeth in her head. Ask her why she done it, friends, and what goes on in that red plush chair. What's the charm that draws her there—the dentist's drill or Cupid's dart?

"WE HAVE only one more to consider just now, and we will make our mention brief. We need only to name her—young Widder Ames! . . . O friends and feller sinners! . . . If you could only know what we know! . . . But Christian charity bids us cease. And all we can do is to promise to tell you, in our next message out of the skies, which one of the good married souls on the school board took her out one night last week and nearly run into Bill Whitaker's car, while tryin' to drive his own with one hand. We don't like to tell such things, even about the young Widder Ames, for it shows her in a lurid light; and, say what you please, a woman's a woman. We've all had mothers. It don't seem right.

"So we'll try not to be too hard on her,



its master drops and to obey such commands as "Left," "Right," and "Forward." For the final test of the dog's ability to lead, the trainer follows blindfolded.

Next, the dog is turned over to its blind master, and together they practice the signals. At last they learn to work with perfect team-play. The master, assuming command, directs the dog where he wants to go; the dog leads him there safely. For example, suppose that Morris Frank wants to travel to a certain building in his home city. He knows that, as he leaves the steps of his home, he must turn to the right, proceed four blocks, then turn to the left and proceed three blocks. Starting out, he gives the command, "Right." The lead dog, turning right, goes straight down the street, while her master counts the curbs.

At the fourth block Morris commands, "Left." The dog turns and leads the way while three blocks are counted off. If the route is one to be followed day after day, the dog will soon lead the way without commands.

Morris Frank knows the streets and buildings of Nashville like a book and can direct Buddy to almost any place he wishes to reach. Even in a strange city he is not much worse off than are we who have perfect vision. He simply asks someone, just as we do, the direction of his destination and the number of blocks he must travel to reach it. He and Buddy do the rest. If the destination is in the middle of the block, of course, it may be necessary to make further inquiries concerning its exact location.

"The fully trained dog acts as the eyes,

but not as the mind, of the master," says Morris. "The blind person must do his own talking; the dog can only serve him. The dog must not be credited with having supernatural or even human powers."

One of the chief difficulties encountered by the partners of The Seeing Eye is the public's interest in them as they go their way. Sometimes a person will call or whistle to the dog, distracting it from its work, perhaps at a most hazardous moment, little realizing that the blind master is being robbed momentarily of his "eyes."

For this reason The Seeing Eye has listed ten commandments which it asks the public to observe. These include admonitions not to touch, pet, or feed the dog, or otherwise attract its attention, so diverting the animal's mind from its work.

CONRAD FREDERICK SMITH

## Clara Manages a Wardrobe of a Thousand Dresses



UPON the patient shoulders of Clara, the wardrobe woman of the Follies, rests the success or failure of those hectic "first nights!" Somebody has his bank roll in the show. He's worried! There's a star whose season's run and reputation depend on it! She's worried! But Clara—

Blond, Scandinavian, and placid, she hooks this and unhooks that; gets the chorus girls out of one dizzy combination of clothes into another; walks unruffled through the madhouse of uncertainty. Is Clara worried? She's shivering blue with fright. But Clara is a troupier. She remembers only that "the show must go on."

And so, while nobody's sure of anything else—maybe the lines and the music and the cues and the stars and the whole works will all go haywire—everybody's sure of one thing: the clothes will be all right; for Clara's on the job.

Down in the basement under the stage—under that steady tap-tap of dancing feet, under the *wham* and *bam* of changing sets—Clara remains "calmly" responsible for the quick and bewildering changes of thirteen hundred costumes. Hats in all sizes from a feather to a three-foot wedding cake with burning candles! Gowns from one piece of chiffon on which the fastenings must be invisible to skirts of forty layers and twelve parts. Clara, in the midst of it all, calmly hooks and unhooks, puts away and lays out, and so the show goes on. . . .

Twenty years ago Clara and a friend



PHOTOGRAPH BY D. JAY CULVER

*Down in the basement under the stage, Clara, of the Follies, plies her needle, keeping the hundreds of costumes shipshape*

who was a flashing beauty wanted to be "actresses." They tackled the big city together, the friend gayly confident, Clara brave—but doubtful.

The friend got the job—a "pony" in a chorus. Every night Clara would buy a seat in the second balcony to watch and cry a little—and wait at the stage door, a little gray shadow in the alley. One night she heard the doorman talking on the telephone—

"Yes—they're going to hire another girl tomorrow—come around at two-thirty and ask for Mrs. Chester—"

The next day Clara called at the stage door at two and asked for Mrs. Chester—said she'd heard there was a job. Mrs. Chester, short and stout, looked up at her over square spectacles.

"Had any experience?"

Clara swallowed quickly and said, "Oh, yes, indeed."

"Ready to start right now?"

Clara's heart missed a beat. "Yes—of course—"

Mrs. Chester looked at her sharply.

"You don't look very old," she said—"we've got eleven changes."

Clara didn't know how to answer—didn't know what "eleven changes" could mean.

"Oh—that's all right," she replied, and laughed a little.

"Well," Mrs. Chester said—"come on down. I'll give you a try."

Clara gasped. She had never dreamed it was as easy as this to get to be an actress! "Down" proved

to be into the basement—into an open space lined with racks and racks of glittering clothes; with open baskets and hampers and trunks of clothes; tables and hangers and hooks of clothes! Sewing machines—white sheets—ironing boards—more clothes!

Clara stared breathlessly. What was it all about? The job was that of helping Mrs. Chester handle the clothes for those "eleven changes." Mrs. Chester was wardrobe woman—the second dresser had quit the night before. Somehow, Clara managed to handle the job. She hooked, unhooked, fetched, and carried; discovered how every dress should be laid out so that it could be stepped into, pulled up, and fastened in the flash of a second. It was midnight before she remembered that what she'd come for was to be an actress!



Her pretty friend danced a couple of seasons, then got a little plump—and before Broadway knew she had been there at all, it was all over for her.

After the same two seasons Clara was handling wardrobe with the best of them! After five years, she was handling the Follies—more than a thousand costumes—seventeen changes. Today nobody in the show business is better known than Clara. From the biggest producer to the littlest chorus girl it's: "Hello, Clara. Say, it's great to see you! What show you with now? Sure, I knew you were on the road last season—don't you remember I saw you in Chicago?"

She has traveled all over the United States—handled almost every type of show. Hers is an enormous duty. On the day the costumes are delivered, the wardrobe

woman must be ready to receive and take care of them; put everything in just the right order for the stage numbers; check fastenings, underclothes, shoulder straps, in every garment; get the time between numbers for dressing and undressing; take the quick changes to the stage with everything ready for a five- or six-second change. And on the road she must "pack up" once a week. Then there are certain things to be washed and ironed every week—to be done up after one show and ready for the next. Everything must be checked up after every performance. *Must be ready!*

"I love the business," Clara says, sitting on the end of her sewing machine, snatching a sandwich and a cup of coffee between shows. "I don't have time to know when I'm tired. I don't have a chance to know if I'm blue." She loves the thrill of it—the

rush—the color—the life. "But most of all," she says, "I love the thought that you can't quit—you've got to go on! No matter what happens, you can't be licked!"

"But do you *like* to be wandering around back-alley stage doors at two o'clock in the morning?" you ask her. "Do you *like* to work in a basement, to climb up and down stairs lugging tons of clothes twenty times a day? Do you *like* to go through those forty-eight-hour dress rehearsals and the hair-raising first nights when everybody's *insane*, when you work all day and all night till you are almost ready to *drop*?"

"I love it," she'll repeat, her eyes shining above dark circles from too little sleep. "Those are exactly the reasons why I love it! There can't be any lap dogs in *this* business! Only the bulldogs can hold on!"

WILL DIXON



## A Cross-Country Bus Is the Professor's Classroom



PHOTOS FROM KEYSTONE VIEW CO., INC., N. Y.



*Education at the roadside. Dr. William Goldsmith (inset) lecturing to one of the classes of his Omnibus College*

"OMNIBUS COLLEGE, Bus E," I read on the side of a big green and orange bus which was rolling out of a filling station in Tennessee.

"That's the sixth one which has been here in the last hour," the service man told me. "Some sort of a school on wheels from Kansas, and they sure are a lively crowd. They come this way every summer, and every summer there's more of them."

Two days later, driving at dusk into the tourist park of a Virginia village, I found the whole town excited over this same Omnibus College, which had arrived a few minutes before and was pitching camp—"just like a circus," as one native remarked.

And indeed it was like a circus. Baggage was being unloaded, tents were going up, supper was being prepared; everybody seemed to know what to do and how to do

it. Almost before we side-line watchers could believe it possible, all was finished, a whistle blew, and one hundred and fifty hungry young people were passing down the line for their evening meal.

Determined to find out what it was all about, I proceeded to make the acquaintance of this unique traveling institution.

I found a jolly and enthusiastic party composed largely of young teachers and

college students from western states who were out to see some of the high spots in the United States and Canada and were doing their sight-seeing in an efficient and understanding way. That they were also getting health and a good time, as well as college credit, from this outdoor class work was evident. From the Director, Dr. William Goldsmith, college professor, scientist, and author, I learned the story of the Omnibus College.

"It was the 'flu bug' which started it all," Doctor Goldsmith said. Then he related that in 1920, after a year of strenuous research work in the laboratories of Johns Hopkins University, his health was so wrecked from influenza that recovery was doubtful. It was then, with his wife and one child, that he first took to the open road.

He later became (Continued on page 155)

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